

31 May 2006

PRESS RELEASE ON TEACHERS DAY

Botswana teachers will be commemorating Teachers Day on 1 June 2006 in various parts of the country. It goes without saying that teachers themselves lobbied for this day and it was ultimately granted. It is therefore a fertile ground for them to see how best they utilize the day since it provides the appropriate platform. Such spaces are rare in other countries and for us it's a great bonus.

BOFESETE however feels that the day is not fully owned by the Teachers since government officials have since hijacked the better part of the day and teachers and their organizations just play a peripheral role. It is obvious that teachers need a lions share out of this day in terms of managing it. As it is today, Ministry of Education officials set the pace for the day's agenda. They decide who is going to speak and in many cases also decide what is to be said.

BOFESETE however feels that the MOE should completely relinquish the day and leave its management to teachers and their organizations. While BOFESETE condemns lack of participation on the day by some teachers, the same teachers have repeatedly blamed MOE officials for being too involved in their day. BOFESETE and other teacher organizations have the capacity to run the day just like BDF and Police Days are run by the soldiers and police officers respectively without the interference of Office of the President. World Press Freedom Day is run by media workers and activists and not Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology. Labour Day is run by unions and not Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. The above ministry officials are invited at the pleasure of the organizers and they may be left out.

BOFESETE wants to see more fanfare and grandeur out of this day. We want the participation of activists, trade unionists and other speakers who can help teachers and other workers to soar to greater heights by sharing with us their experiences. We have such people locally, regionally and internationally who are part of our network.

This year's theme "The Teacher- A Universal Pillar in Behavioral Change, Academic Excellence and Economic Diversification" would be nicely handled by the personalities we have in our networks.

Thank you

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